

Tips For Getting Your Kids To Wear Bike Helmets

1. **Help your children establish the helmet habit early by getting them helmets when they begin riding.** If your children learn to wear helmets whenever they ride their bikes, it will soon become a habit for a lifetime. If possible, start them off with helmets while they are still on their tricycles. It's never too late, however, to get your children into helmets.
2. **Wear one yourself.** Provide a role model for your kids; they learn best by observing you. Whenever you ride your bike, put on your helmet. Show them that you hold yourself and your brains in high esteem.
3. **Whenever you first get helmets for your kids, talk to them about why you want them to protect their heads.** Let them know:
 - Their bikes are not toys, but their first vehicles.
 - You love them and value them and their intelligence.
 - They can hurt their heads permanently or even die from a head injury.
 - Most professional athletes use helmets when participating in sports. Football and hockey players, baseball batters and race car drivers wear them. Bicycle racers now are required to use them when racing in the United States and in the Olympics.
4. **Reward your kids for wearing helmets.** Praise them. Give them special treats or privileges when they wear them without having to be told to.
5. **Don't let them ride their bikes unless they wear their helmets.** Be consistent. If you allow your children to ride occasionally without their helmets, they will not believe your messages about the importance of wearing them. Tell them they have to find another way to play or must walk to get somewhere if they don't want to use them.
6. **Plan bicycle outings together during which all family members wear their helmets.**
7. **Encourage their friends to wear helmets.** Peer pressure can be used in a positive way if several families in the neighborhood start making helmet use a regular habit at the same time.
8. **Remember:** Accidents causing head injuries can occur on sidewalks, driveways, bike paths and parks, as well as streets. You and your children cannot predict when a situation will occur that will end in a fall from a bike. Therefore, it is important to wear a helmet whenever riding, even if it's "just down the street."



For more information, contact
North Dakota Department of Health
Division of Injury Prevention & Control
600 East Boulevard Ave., Dept. 301
Bismarck, ND 58505-0200
1.800.472.2286 (press 1)